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SOUTHWEST INFORMATION OFFICE: Dallas, Texas

Technical information: (972) 850-4800 BLSInfoDallas@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/southwest

Media contact: (972) 850-4800

Occupational Employment and Wages in Brownsville-Harlingen, May 2016

Workers in the Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$16.52 in May 2016, about 31 percent below the nationwide average of \$23.86, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 18 of the 22 major occupational groups, including construction and extraction; computer and mathematical; and installation, maintenance and repair. Local wage levels in the four remaining occupational groups were not statistically different from their respective national averages.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, Brownsville employment was more highly concentrated in 5 of the 22 occupational groups including personal care and service; healthcare support; and education, training, and library. Conversely, 12 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including business and financial operations; production; and management. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Brownsville-Harlingen, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2016

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Brownsville-Harlingen, TX		United States	Brownsville-Harlingen, TX	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾	
Total, all occupations	100.0	100.0		\$23.86	\$16.52	*	-31
Management	5.1	2.5	*	56.74	44.03	*	-22
Business and financial operations	5.2	2.2	*	36.09	29.91	*	-17
Computer and mathematical	3.0	0.5	*	42.25	29.00	*	-31
Architecture and engineering	1.8	0.5	*	40.53	31.05	*	-23
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.3	*	35.06	28.21	*	-20
Community and social service	1.4	1.4		22.69	20.61	*	-9
Legal	0.8	0.4	*	50.95	43.05		-16
Education, training, and library	6.2	9.2	*	26.21	21.23	*	-19
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.4	0.6	*	28.07	20.38	*	-27
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.9	5.6		38.06	39.25		3
Healthcare support	2.9	6.8	*	14.65	10.15	*	-31
Protective service	2.4	3.4	*	22.03	21.95		0
Food preparation and serving related	9.2	9.9		11.47	9.71	*	-15
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	3.1		13.47	10.50	*	-22
Personal care and service	3.2	12.1	*	12.74	9.14	*	-28
Sales and related	10.4	10.2		19.50	14.70	*	-25
Office and administrative support	15.7	16.8	*	17.91	13.33	*	-26
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1	*	13.37	11.50		-14

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Brownsville-Harlingen, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2016 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Brownsville-Harlingen, TX		United States	Brownsville-Harlingen, TX		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Construction and extraction.....	4.0	1.8	*	23.51	14.92	*	-37
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.3	*	22.45	15.49	*	-31
Production	6.5	3.9	*	17.88	13.90	*	-22
Transportation and material moving.....	6.9	5.4	*	17.34	13.73	*	-21

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in the Brownsville-Harlingen, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

Note: * The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group – education, training, and library – was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Brownsville had 12,690 jobs in education, training, and library, accounting for 9.2 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 6.2-percent national share. However, the local wage for this occupational group was significantly below the U.S. average. At \$21.23 an hour, the mean wage for Brownsville education, training, and library workers was about 19 percent below the \$26.21 national average.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the education, training, and library group included secondary school teachers, except special and career/technical education (2,450), elementary school teachers, except special education (2,300), and teacher assistants (1,910). Among the higher-paying jobs were secondary school teachers, except special and career/technical education and middle school teachers, except special and career/technical education, with mean annual wages of \$52,880 and \$52,330, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were teacher assistants (\$20,490) and substitute teachers (\$24,610). (Detailed occupational data for the education, training, and library group are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_15180.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the Brownsville metropolitan area, above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the education, training, and library group. For instance, both secondary school teachers, except special and career/technical education, and substitute teachers were employed at 2.5 times the national average. The Brownsville location quotient for secondary school teachers, except special and career/technical education, was among the highest in all metropolitan areas for this particular occupation.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Texas Workforce Commission.

Note

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. The OES data available from BLS include cross-industry occupational employment and wage estimates for the nation; over 650 areas, including states and the District of Columbia, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), metropolitan divisions, nonmetropolitan areas, and territories; national industry-specific estimates at the NAICS sector, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industry levels, and national estimates by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm.

OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Each year, two semiannual panels of approximately 200,000 sampled establishments are contacted, one panel in May and the other in November. Responses are obtained by mail, Internet or other electronic means, email, telephone, or personal visit. The May 2016 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2016, November 2015, May 2015, November 2014, May 2014, and November 2013. The overall national response rate for the six panels, based on the 50 states and the District of Columbia, is 73 percent based on establishments and 69 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 58 percent of total national employment. The sample in the Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,460 establishments with a response rate of 63 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The May 2016 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Metropolitan area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Cameron County in Texas.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southwest. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request . Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Brownsville-Harlingen, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2016

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Education, training, and library occupations.....	12,690	1.5	\$21.23	\$44,170
Vocational education teachers, postsecondary	70	0.6	21.02	43,720
Preschool teachers, except special education	270	0.7	20.49	42,620
Kindergarten teachers, except special education	290	2.0	(5)	48,520
Elementary school teachers, except special education ..	2,300	1.7	(5)	50,520
Middle school teachers, except special and career/ technical education.....	1,380	2.2	(5)	52,330
Secondary school teachers, except special and career/ technical education.....	2,450	2.5	(5)	52,880
Career/technical education teachers, secondary school.	240	3.1	(5)	50,760
Special education teachers, kindergarten and elementary school	250	1.3	(5)	50,020
Special education teachers, middle school	140	1.6	(5)	51,320
Special education teachers, secondary school	180	1.4	(5)	56,010
Adult basic and secondary education and literacy teachers and instructors	90	1.6	18.30	38,050
Self-enrichment education teachers.....	120	0.5	11.02	22,920
Teachers and instructors, all other, except substitute teachers.....	240	0.8	(5)	35,640
Substitute teachers.....	1,510	2.5	11.83	24,610
Librarians.....	160	1.3	27.58	57,370
Library technicians	40	0.4	11.22	23,340
Instructional coordinators	120	0.9	30.59	63,620
Teacher assistants.....	1,910	1.5	(5)	20,490

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Brownsville-Harlingen, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_15180.htm

(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a "year-round, full-time" hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

(5) Wages for some occupations that do not generally work year-round, full time, are reported either as hourly wages or annual salaries depending on how they are typically paid.